

BACKGROUND

Analysis of Milwaukee Readiness to Qualify for Race to the Top

Invest in Success Committee Report to the MPS Innovation and Improvement Advisory Council

Background

The MPS Innovation and Improvement Advisory Council (the Council) was formed by Governor Jim Doyle, Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Evers to provide oversight, advice and support of Milwaukee Public Schools. One specific charge of the Council was to provide feedback to the Governor's office for consideration in its application for a competitive federal grant referred to as "Race to the Top." The Invest in Success Committee (the Committee), a subcommittee of the Council, was specifically charged with completing an initial assessment of how the district's current policies and practices align with the preliminary guidance for the grant and to make recommendations for possible reforms to consider in order to increase the State's competitiveness and improve overall academic outcomes in MPS. In addition, the State Superintendent has asked the Committee to provide feedback and suggestions for specific Race to the Top requirements.

"Race to the Top" is the name of a \$4 billion discretionary grant that is one component of the roughly \$100 billion in total education related funding included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has indicated that the grants will be targeted at those states that demonstrate a serious commitment to the four reforms that have been laid out as priorities for the ARRA dollars, along with other competitive criteria included in the specific grant guidance. The four priority areas for ARRA are:

- Rigorous college and career ready standards and high-quality assessments
- Establishing data systems and using data for improvement
- Increasing Teacher Effectiveness and Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers
- Turning Around the Lowest-Performing Schools

The Race to the Top preliminary guidance, released in late July 2009, also highlighted one competitive and three invitational priorities:

- Competitive: Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
- Invitational: Expansion of Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems
- Invitational: Coordination and Vertical Alignment (P-20) - among early childhood, K-12, postsecondary, workforce organizations
- Invitational: School-Level Conditions for Reform - provide schools with flexibilities such as, selecting staff, extended learning time, school controlled budgets, performance based credits, comprehensive services to high need students.

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In its initial meeting, the Committee decided to focus its efforts on two of the ARRA priority areas – Increasing Teacher Effectiveness and Turning Around the Lowest-Performing Schools, since these had the most direct connection to district level reforms. Subsequently, the DPI also requested that the Committee provide feedback on the Competitive Priority related to STEM initiatives.

The final guidance was issued in November 2009. The application will be submitted by the Governor's office and is due January 10, 2010, for the first round of applications. A second round of applications will be due on June 1.

This report captures the Committee's work to identify the current district initiatives or policies in each of these areas, the legal or systemic challenges to implementing reforms, and the Committee's recommendations for not only increasing the State's competitiveness for the grant, but more importantly to lead to improved student outcomes. The report will be submitted to the Governor's office for consideration as they complete the Race to the Top application.

Committee Membership

The following members met on eight occasions between July 28 and November 16, 2009.

Dr. Joan Prince – Committee Chair	Brenda Martinez
Tom McGinnity	Amber Moreen
Mary Ellen McCormack-Mervis	Bob Peterson/ Deb Karow, MTEA
Lourdes Castillo	representative (MTEA voted not to
Dick Weiss	participate after September 8)

DPI Liaison: Scott Jones

MPS Liaison: Chris Thiel (Attended meetings through August 11)

The Invest in Success Committee's charge, as well as the agendas, meeting minutes and any supporting documents for all meetings are available on the Council website: <http://www.city.milwaukee.gov/educatedcity>.

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Report Structure

This report is organized by the seven specific criteria in the Preliminary Race to the Top Guidance that pertain to the Committee's two priority areas of Increasing Teacher Effectiveness and Turning Around Low-Performing Schools. The specific criteria directly from the Race to the Top application is referenced in the box at the beginning of each section, followed by an analysis of how the district currently meets each criterion or plans to meet it, the systemic challenges to implementing the criterion, and relevant models the Committee evaluated. More information about each of the models is available in a table included as an Appendix to the report. Each section concludes with recommendations by the Committee to achieve the goals of the specific criterion.

The Committee's intent in its recommendations is both to identify strategies that will make the State and district more competitive for the Race to the Top Grant, and more importantly, to identify strategies that have the potential to significantly improve academic outcomes in the district. The Committee did not attempt to estimate the cost of each initiative, but did indicate when appropriate if there were funding opportunities outside of the Race to the Top Grant that could help support the recommendations.

The Committee feels its recommendations collectively meet the key Race to the Top Criteria in the two priority areas. As there is much interaction between the various components, some of the recommendations are repeated in multiple sections and are indicated with a double asterisk. The Committee has summarized its key recommendations below.

Key Recommendations

The Committee feels the following recommendations are essential to realizing meaningful reform of MPS. These recommendations incorporate many components that will increase the State's competitiveness for the Race to the Top application. As the Committee's work was focused on only two key priority areas in Race to the Top, these do not necessarily represent a comprehensive list of all necessary reforms. However, the committee does also make recommendations for systemic changes that must be addressed for any reforms to succeed.

- 1. Make human capital development a priority.** MPS leadership at the highest levels must make it a priority to identify and implement a human capital management strategy that will recruit, retain and support effective teachers and leaders. The Human Resource Division should be held accountable by top leadership for achieving the goals outlined in that strategy. An effective human capital management team is critical to implementing any other reforms.
- 2. Revise compensation and evaluation system.** The Committee supports creating a revised compensation, evaluation and support structure for teachers that incorporates student growth as one of several factors. The committee lays out several other key criteria that it feels must

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be part of that revised structure (see page 12). Many of these components are consistent with the A-Path compensation proposal in MTEA's Opportunity Plan.

3. **Turnaround struggling schools.** The Committee lays out a strategy for turning around struggling schools that includes the following components (see page 24 for details)
 - a. Establish an independent, straightforward ranking system for all schools with three easily understood levels.
 - b. Expand capacity in high-achieving schools by replicating successful models
 - c. Encourage partnership and collaboration among schools.
 - d. Identify schools that are failing and implement one of two models:
 - i. Turnaround the school by changing staff and implementing key reforms, such as extended learning time and offering incentives for highly effective teachers to teach in those schools.
 - ii. Close the school and offer students options in high-performing schools, which should actively recruit those students and receive additional resources to help support the enrollment increase.
4. **Ensure a pipeline of quality teachers and leaders to staff schools.** This can be accomplished by increasing collaboration between MPS and existing teacher and principal preparation and alternative certification programs. In addition, consider establishing a teacher residency program specifically targeted at the turnaround schools, similar to the Academy of Urban School Leadership (AUSL) in Chicago.
5. **Implement a robust, consistent tool to assess classroom readiness.** Beginning with MPS, the State should implement a consistent, comprehensive tool to assess the readiness of teachers for the classroom, regardless of the program they come from. The PACT assessment in California is one such model, but other models could be considered as well.
6. **Establish Milwaukee Neighborhood Center in targeted neighborhoods, with the goal of establishing a "Citywide" Neighborhood Center.** Modeled after the Harlem Children's Zone, neighborhoods with turnaround schools should be targeted to become a neighborhood center. These centers should provide comprehensive and systemic academic, housing, nutrition, healthcare and other key social supports to the children and families in the surrounding neighborhoods. The goal should be that these targeted partnerships and supports become system wide so that Milwaukee eventually is a "Citywide" Neighborhood Center. (See details on page 26)
7. **Address systemic issues that affect how our children learn and develop.** The Committee expressed considerable concern about the need for fundamental change in the delivery of services that affect how children learn and develop. These systems include among others, the overall delivery of healthcare, housing, nutrition, and other social services to our children, parents and families; the

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system for developing and acquiring talent to lead and teach in our schools; the system of leadership and accountability to motivate quality outcomes. Without the leadership necessary to change and/or connect these systems, any other reform efforts will fail or at best fall far short of their full potential.

Conclusion

The Committee encourages the Governor's office to give thoughtful consideration to these recommendations as it moves forward with the Race to the Top Application. The Committee also urges the State, MPS and the Milwaukee community to work together to secure resources to implement these reforms, regardless of the outcome of the Race to the Top application.

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Great Teachers/Great Leaders – Alternative Pathways

Race to the Top Criterion: Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals:

The extent to which the State has--

- (i) Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;
- (ii) Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and
- (iii) A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage.

Does MPS have strategies that meet the criterion or have plans in place to do so?

The state allows for alternative routes to certification **in shortage areas**. MPS currently has teachers from a variety of alternative teaching programs including Teach for America, Milwaukee Teacher Education Center (MTEC), Milwaukee Teaching Fellows, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee Special Education, and CESA 1. New Leaders for New Schools has provided over 30 administrators for MPS as well.

Several of these organizations have partnered to form the Milwaukee Human Capital Leadership Collaborative. The goal of this group is to discuss ways to coordinate with each other and with the appropriate leadership at MPS to improve and inform the MPS human capital strategy.

Currently, there is not a mechanism for assessing the relative performance or specialty of each program.

Teachers from these programs are assigned by the Human Resources Office of Certificated Staffing at MPS and are not interviewed by the school. The process for assigning candidates from these programs is not transparent and creates confusion about how to best meet the needs of the district.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address in order to implement the criterion?

Yes. There is serious concern about the coordination between these programs and the MPS Human Resource Department, as it relates to placement of the interns or graduates and the communication from the district about its needs for teachers and principals from these programs. To realize the full value of these programs would require a significant change in the way that MPS Human Resource Department interacts with and incorporates these programs into its overall talent acquisition strategy.

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Models/Ideas Committee discussed in this area:

- Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) – a common assessment of teacher preparedness used in California for initial teacher licensure. The assessment is now being expanded to other states and could serve as a consistent comprehensive model.
- Consideration of having each alternative credentialing program focus on particular areas of need in the district.
- Residency Programs such as the Academy for Urban School Leadership's Urban Teacher Residency Program or Boston's Residency program. These programs include a year-long residency in an urban school that includes coursework with a partner university. These could be considered as another model for ensuring a pipeline of teachers and leaders or could be implemented in partnership with existing programs. In addition to Race to the Top funds, there is money available for residency programs as part of the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

Committee Recommendations:

- 1. Make human capital management a district priority.** MPS leadership at the highest levels must make it a priority to identify and implement a human resource strategy that will recruit, retain, and support effective teachers and leaders. The Human Resource Division should be held accountable for achieving the goals outlined in that strategy. **
- 2. Improve coordination with Alternative Certification Programs.** Alternative teaching programs can be a critical component of an overall human resource strategy aimed at securing high quality teachers across all grades and subject areas. As MPS works to improve its overall human capital development strategy, improving coordination with these programs should be part of that process.
 - a.** For example, the process could be streamlined by having a single entity screen potential alternative certification applicants to ensure they meet clear-cut, transparent criteria. The Alternative teaching programs could then make offers to that pool of applicants who choose the program that they feel is the best fit for them. Upon completion of an alternative certification program, the same entity could assist teachers to review open positions, prepare for interviews and complete district hiring requirements.
- 3. The district should establish transparent criteria for placement of teachers and leaders into classrooms, share those criteria and ensure the placement policy is followed.**
- 4. Implement a robust, consistent tool to assess classroom readiness.** Beginning with MPS, the State should implement a consistent, comprehensive tool to assess the readiness

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of teachers for the classroom, regardless of the program they come from. The PACT assessment in California is one such model, but other models could be considered as well. **

- 5. Pair teacher candidates with high-performing teachers.** Teachers and leaders from these programs should be initially paired with high-performing teachers or principals to ensure that they can experience best practices right away.
- 6. Consider establishing a Residency Program.** The concept of a Residency program that would specifically focus on preparing teacher candidates to teach in MPS should be considered, similar to AUSL. Additional funding beyond Race to the Top is available for such programs via the Higher Education Opportunity Act. **
- 7. Provide a comprehensive comparison of all teacher preparation programs.** A comprehensive, comparative analysis should be completed of all teacher and principal preparation programs, including alternative certification programs. The goal of the analysis would be to determine which programs have particular strengths or weaknesses in preparing teachers in specific areas. To the extent the data permits, the analysis should control for other factors that impact student achievement. Having an external entity complete this analysis is highly recommended. **

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Great Teachers/Great Leaders – Differentiation Based on Student Performance

Race to the Top Criterion: Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance.

Extent to which state in collaboration with participating LEAS has a plan to:

- (i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student;
- (ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement;
- iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; and
- (iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding- (a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development; (b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities; (c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and (d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.

Does MPS have strategies that meet the criterion or have plans in place to do so?

Measuring student growth and providing data to teachers:

- MPS has a strong relationship with Wisconsin Center on Education Research –national leaders on value-added assessments. Therefore, it seems that the district would be able to readily access data that captures student growth at that level if that is the student growth approach the State chooses to take. Comparable assessments would need to be developed for teachers in subject areas or grades for which there are no State assessments.

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- MPS has a system in place via EDStat to share student performance and other information on a regular basis to principals and teachers. That tool could be used to provide additional data on student growth.
- MPS participates on the Common Report Card Committee, comprised of representatives from non-MPS charter schools and from the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. The committee is working to establish common measures of school success including student growth measures which could serve as a basis for defining student growth for the State.

Using student growth data for evaluation, professional development, compensation, promotion or tenure:

- Current evaluation, tenure and dismissal processes in MPS do not include any measure of student academic growth. The district has been able to work with the MTEA to implement Memoranda of Understanding in five high schools as part of the First Things First framework to allow for teachers to be exited from the school if they are not demonstrating the expected standards. This approach of negotiating a change on a limited basis for particular schools could be considered in discussion of using data for the purposes identified above as well.
- MPS currently uses a process referred to as TEAM that provides mentoring for teachers that are deemed to be struggling based on self or peer-referral and can include a process of counseling teachers out of the profession when appropriate.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address in order to implement the criterion?

Yes. There are several considerations that would need to be addressed in order to implement a policy that uses student growth data for evaluation, compensation or promotion such as:

- State law was changed in November 2009 to remove the prohibition from using state tests for the purpose of teacher evaluation. Removing that specific restriction was a requirement for eligibility for the Race to the Top grant.
- The law still prohibits the use of test data for the purpose of disciplining or dismissing a teacher.
- Under the new law, any change to teacher evaluations to include a component of student performance would be a mandatory subject of bargaining and therefore would need to be negotiated with the MTEA prior to implementation.

Moreover, the committee expressed several concerns with the ability of the existing HR system to support the reforms contemplated. These concerns were confirmed by a study of the HR department that was completed in March 2009 and released in October 2009 which found several concerns including the following:

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- There is no evidence that HR is involved in developing strategies that would support evaluation practices that hold employees accountable for results.
- The district would have difficulty assessing performance or holding staff accountable because personnel evaluations, where they exist, are not tied to goals at any level.
- There is no commitment to provide professional training and development opportunities for existing employees.
- There is no evidence HR is involved in developing strategies to help employees develop skills need for promotion to key leadership positions.

Implementing reforms to policies regarding teacher professional development, evaluation and compensation will be impossible to do effectively if these overall HR system flaws are not addressed. For example, incorporating a component of student achievement into the evaluation process will not make any difference if there is no accountability for ensuring regular evaluations.

Using student achievement as part of a comprehensive system to evaluate teachers requires a thoughtful approach to the quality and timing of the assessments. For example, Wisconsin currently administers the State tests in November, which requires that any analysis of the gains a student makes must be spread across both their current teacher and their previous teacher, which does not always provide an accurate picture of a teacher's impact on student growth. New York recently moved its testing date to May to address that challenge.

Models/Ideas Committee discussed in this area:

- MTEA Opportunity Plan – This plan incorporates the A-Path compensation plan and also would eliminate residency, eliminate principal tenure, improve HR hiring practices and require a database to track teachers who need mentoring.
- Teacher Advancement Programs (TAP) – The TAP model is not a compensation model exclusively but does include a performance-based award component, in addition to different career paths, targeted professional development and a structured, comprehensive evaluation tool.
- QComp - Denver's TAP program
- A-Path <http://www.edcomp.org/OneColumn.aspx?id=952&terms=A-Path>. A-Path does not include a performance component based on student achievement, but does allow for different career paths, market incentives and other strategies that could be included in a comprehensive reform plan.

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Committee Recommendations:

Revise Teacher Evaluation, Compensation and Professional Development System:

1. Any teacher compensation revision must be done with the recognition that teaching in an urban setting is one of the most challenging professions. It must strengthen the culture of professionalism toward and among teachers and must include strong induction and ongoing supports to help each teacher realize his or her full potential.
2. Once a quality evaluation system that incorporates student growth is implemented, the State should revisit the restriction on using student achievement data for teacher dismissal. This should only be done, however, if procedures are in place to ensure that teachers and principals can only be removed after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent and fair procedures.
3. MPS leadership at the highest levels must make it a priority to identify and implement a human resource strategy that will recruit, retain and support effective teachers and leaders. The Human Resource Division should be held accountable for achieving the goals outlined in that strategy. **
4. The district should implement strategic teacher compensation and evaluation reform that has the following characteristics:
 - a. Establishes a competitive base pay system that encourages all teachers to advance in their profession. This can be accomplished by establishing different career paths that teachers can move into as they consistently demonstrate skills that directly benefit student achievement and/or take on additional responsibilities. It could include hybrid roles to include time in and out of the classroom.
 - b. Includes market incentives for hard to staff positions for individuals who have the requisite skills.
 - c. Includes a residency year in which first year teachers spend some time out of the classroom for professional development or for mentoring from lead teachers identified for their effectiveness.
 - d. Includes a component of rewarding schools or teams of teachers based on student growth to encourage collaboration. All teachers should be eligible to qualify for rewards with documentation of full participation in collaboration.
 - e. Encourages and aids more teachers to become Nationally Board Certified.
 - f. Encourages effective teachers to share their knowledge with other teachers or other schools.
 - g. Requires a comprehensive evaluation of teachers which includes student growth (see data recommendations below) as one component. Evaluators must use at least three

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meaningful, clearly defined categories for teachers. The distribution of teachers by category should be tracked annually to ensure that the evaluation provides meaningful differentiation among teachers. This will facilitate effective targeting of professional development.

- h. Possibly allow for an additional credit toward career advancement for those who commit to serving in a low-performing or turnaround school.
 - i. Targets professional development based on efficacy data and ensures that professional development is targeted where teachers have the most need.
 - j. Is initially implemented in a targeted number of low-performing schools as part of an overall strategy to redistribute quality teachers, but other schools could opt-in to the model as well. Eventually this should be expanded to all schools.
- 5. MPS should also implement a thoughtful assessment of principals that focuses on improved instruction, identifies behaviors conducive to good leadership, and allows for tailored professional development.
 - 6. MPS should seek additional funding outside of Race to the Top, such as the Teacher Incentive Fund Program, to support the compensation system.
 - 7. MPS should assess how any of the various career paths or roles defined in the system interacts with currently existing mentoring or coaching positions to avoid duplication.
 - 8. For any aspects above that require collective bargaining, the State will need to demonstrate a strategy to ensure that they can be accomplished. Those components that are part of A-Path or the MTEA Opportunity Plan should facilitate that.

Ensure a quality data structure to support the evaluation and compensation system:

- 9. The State should ensure there is an electronic data record that follows each student and can be accessed by any Wisconsin school the student attends. The record should include test scores, attendance, GPA and other relevant data such as IEPs, family alerts, etc.
- 10. The State should review the recommendations of the Common Report Card Committee that pertain to assessing student achievement and consider adopting as appropriate. The initial recommendations from the Report Card Committee include:
 - a. Include measures for student performance according to grade level/age, a value-added measure, graduation/completion rates and **a post-secondary success indicator**. (value-added and post-secondary measures will require resources)

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- b. Ensure that achievement tests are given annually, at least in third through eighth grade, with additional requirements in high school that will lead to a post-secondary success measure.
11. In addition to the recommendations from the Common Report Card Committee, the Invest in Success Committee is interested in best practices as it pertains to:
- a. Assessing students prior to the 3rd grade to identify any early concerns.
 - b. Timing of the tests to allow for accurate “growth” calculations. The state should consider revising the timing of the state test.
 - c. Ensuring that state tests are aligned with standards.
 - d. Administering baseline assessments at the beginning and end of the year to measure student growth.

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Great Teachers/Great Leaders – Equitable Distribution

Race to the Top Criterion: Ensuring Equitable Distribution of effective teachers and principals: (DPI Priority)

Extent to which state, in collaboration with participating LEAs has a plan to:

- (i) Ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing a plan, informed by reviews of prior actions and data, to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students; and
- (ii) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education; teaching in language instruction educational programs; and teaching in other areas as identified by the State or LEA.

Plans for (i) and (ii) may include, but are not limited to, the implementation of incentives and strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes.

Does MPS have strategies that meet the criterion or have plans in place to do so?

- MPS does use alternative teaching programs to assist in hiring for teacher shortage areas
- In general, MPS offers no additional incentives in the form of extra compensation, additional career opportunities or other strategies to teachers in low-performing or high poverty schools.
- MPS was able to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MTEA as part of the First things First schools, low-performing high schools where a series of reforms were implemented. The goal of the MOU was to ensure good fit for both the teacher and school by establishing criteria that teachers must adhere to or can be exited from the school.
- National Board Certification – As of 2008, there were 589 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) statewide and 44 in Milwaukee, compared to 5,766 MPS teachers in total. The State funds an annual stipend for each NBCT of \$2,000 in the first year, \$2,500 for the subsequent nine years and an additional \$2500 stipend for teaching in a high-poverty school. There is no additional incentive for teaching in hard to staff or low-performing schools or districts. Nationally, 2% of all teachers are NBCTs. Less than one tenth of 1 percent of Milwaukee's teachers are NBCTs.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address in order to implement the criterion?

Any change to the compensation structure for teachers or leaders would be subject to collective bargaining agreements.

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Any strategy to address the distribution of teachers must be a priority of the top leadership in the district who will the appropriate HR staff accountable to implement.

Models/Ideas Committee discussed in this area:

- Chicago AUSL Teacher Training Academy/Urban Teacher Residency Program- five-year commitment to teach in underperforming school.
- National Board Certified Teachers

Committee Recommendations:

- 1. Offer incentives for qualified teachers to teach in low-performing schools.** A new compensation structure should include market incentives for positions that are hard to staff, which could include low-performing schools and/or schools targeted as turn-around schools.
- 2. Reconsider residency for particularly hard to staff subjects, subject to collective bargaining.** Subject to collective bargaining, consideration could be given to eliminating the residency requirement for particularly hard to staff positions. The majority of committee members felt this change should be considered, but it was not endorsed by all.
- 3. Introduce incentive for NBCTs to teach in low-performing schools.** An additional incentive should be given to teachers who become nationally board certified who commit to serving in a low-performing school for a minimum of 3 years.
- 4. Empower teachers with knowledge and resources to support students outside the classroom.** The district should empower teachers with practical knowledge of challenges facing students in an urban setting that can affect their school performance. Such training should be a formal part of the induction or residency program for new teachers. Teachers should also be aware of and have access to current resources that can assist their students and families with health, nutrition or other support services. **
- 5. Market schools and district to potential teachers.** MPS should recruit teachers in a manner that emphasizes the challenging, professional nature of the work and sends a message of pride and prestige. Schools should be encouraged to market themselves to teachers directly to target their specific needs or highlight unique attributes.
- 6. A review of the distribution of effective teachers across schools should be completed and reported out annually.** MPS should identify a plan to address any disproportionate distribution of effective teachers in low-performing schools.

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Great Teachers/Great Leaders – Effective Support

Race to the Top Criterion: Provide effective Support to teachers and principals

Extent to which State has a plan to:

(i) Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Such support might focus on, for example, gathering, analyzing, and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions; designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high-need students; and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices designed to improve student learning outcomes; and

(ii) Measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of those supports in order to improve student achievement .

Does MPS have strategies that meet the criterion or have plans in place to do so?

MPS has recently begun using a tool called EdStat. Principals and teacher leaders review school and classroom level data monthly from a “dashboard,” with the goal of providing real time assessment of how students are performing on a variety of measures. All teachers have access to the data and are encouraged and trained by leadership to track the data and use it to confirm or modify classroom practices.

However, student data has not been incorporated into teacher development strategies. A recent study of the Human Resource Department at Milwaukee Public Schools found that there was no commitment to provide professional training and development opportunities for existing employees, including school level administration staff.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address to implement the criterion?

MPS will need to ensure full implementation of the EdStat tool across all schools. MPS will also need to hold principals and teacher leaders accountable for disseminating the information effectively and hold teachers accountable for reviewing and acting on the data. MPS must also be responsive to and prepared to provide the support that the tool demonstrates are needed at the school level.

Models Committee discussed in this area:

- EdStat Tool

Committee Recommendations:

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1. **Establish an external analysis/review of the impact of EdStat.** The Ed Stat model seems to have many promising features, but is still in the beginning stages of implementation. Resources should be allocated to have an external entity track the effectiveness and support the implementation fidelity of the model. This will help ensure the sustainability of the model and that it is used to create a culture of continuous improvement.
2. **Provide necessary support to implement EdStat.** It is critical that there is sufficient and appropriately trained staff to support teachers and leaders as they learn the Ed Stat tool.
3. **Ensure an HR system that is responsive to professional development needs.** Any effort to support teachers with improved data must be part of an overall effort to improve the Human Resource functions within the district to ensure that the district is responsive to the professional development needs of its teachers and leaders.
4. **Empower teachers with knowledge and resources to support students outside the classroom.** In addition to supporting teachers with data, the district should also empower teachers with practical knowledge of challenges facing students in an urban setting that can affect their school performance. Such training should be a formal part of the induction or residency program for new teachers. Teachers should also be aware of and have access to current resources that can assist their students and families with health, nutrition or other support services. **

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Great Teachers/Great Leaders –Effectiveness of Preparation Programs

Race to the Top Criterion: Improving the Effectiveness of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs.

Extent to which State has a plan to:

(i) Link student achievement and student growth data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and

(ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals

Does MPS have strategies that meet each criterion already or have plans in place to do so?

Currently there is no comparison of the various teacher preparation programs, either traditional or non-traditional.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address in order to implement the criteria?

The State will need to ensure the data can be linked for all districts.

Models/Ideas Committee discussed in this area:

U.S. Education Secretary Duncan has referenced the Louisiana model but the Committee did not have the opportunity to review in detail.

Committee Recommendations:

- 1. Provide comprehensive comparison of all teacher preparation programs.** A comprehensive, comparative analysis should be completed of all teacher and principal preparation programs, including alternative certification programs. The goal of the analysis would be to determine which programs have particular strengths or weaknesses in preparing teachers in specific areas. To the extent the data permits, the analysis should control for other factors that impact student achievement. Having an external entity complete this analysis would be preferable. **
- 2. Improve coordination.** The various teacher preparation programs and MPS should coordinate more frequently to better match the needs of the district and the mission and training of the programs.
- 3. Establish a residency program.** The concept of a residency program that would specifically focus on preparing teacher candidates to teach in MPS should be considered.

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Additional funding beyond Race to the Top is available for such programs via the Higher Education Act. **

4. MPS should identify unique criteria to assess candidates who can be effective MPS teachers and actively pursue them for hire.

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Charter Schools

Race to the Top Criterion: Charter Schools – Extent to which State:

- Has laws prohibiting the number of charter schools.
- Has guidelines regarding how charter schools are monitored, closed, etc. including the extent to which student achievement is required to be a factor in those decisions
- Has closed charters.
- Provides Charter Schools with equitable funding as traditional public schools and commensurate share of all revenue.
- Provides charter schools with facilities funding, assistance with acquiring facilities, access to public facilities, or other supports.
- Does not impose any facility related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those for public schools.

Does MPS have strategies that meet the criteria or have plans in place to do so?

- The MPS School board has the authority to charter schools. In addition, UW-Milwaukee UW-Parkside, City of Milwaukee, and Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) can also charter schools.
- The State provides \$7,775 per pupil for the non- MPS charter schools which can be used for any purpose including facilities. A portion of this amount is funded with local property tax levy. The revenue limit per-pupil for MPS is roughly \$9,800 which is comprised of both state aid and property tax levy.
- There are no State facilities restrictions, though MPS has restrictions on the sale of its surplus buildings to non-MPS charter schools.
- Charter schools have been closed in Milwaukee.
- MPS has a limit on the number of students it can enroll in charter schools equal to 8% of the overall MPS enrollment. This limit is part of a negotiation with the teachers union. There is no cap in place for the non-MPS charter schools.
- The state was recently granted a large charter school grant, under which the State must open 130 new charter schools in the next five years.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address in order to implement the criterion?

- Non-instrumentality charters under MPS are subject to the same state compliance policies as MPS. Non-MPS charters are not.
- Non-MPS charter schools indicate it is challenging to secure facilities.

Models/Ideas Committee discussed in this area:

none

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Committee Recommendations:

1. The Fiscal Efficiency Committee of the MPS Innovation and Improvement Advisory Council recommended that MPS remove its restrictions from selling its surplus facilities to charter school operators.
2. As charter schools expand, it is critical to ensure that there are comprehensive transparent accountability processes in place, while maintaining the autonomy of the school.
3. As DPI and MPS implement their plans to expand the number of charter schools, they should encourage participation by successful charter school operators locally and nationally. (Recommendation added by Council)

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Turning Around Struggling Schools – Implement a Turnaround Model

RTT Criterion: Identify lowest performing schools and implement one of the following models:

- Turnaround: Putting in place new leadership, majority of staff, new governance and improved instructional program **and** provide school with flexibilities such as to select staff, control budget, expand student learning time,
- Restart: Converting to a charter school or contracting w/ education maintenance organization (EMO),
- Closure: Closing schools and placing students in **high performing** schools, *or*
- Transformation model (see attachment for details of each model)

Does MPS have strategies that meet each criterion or have plans in place to do so?

- The State cannot currently mandate any of these models. However a pending bill before the state legislature would allow the State Superintendent to mandate the following in any school or district in need of improvement:
 - Implement a new curriculum
 - Implement new instructional design including expanded school hours, additional pupil supports and services and individual learning plans for pupils
 - Implement professional development programs
 - Make personnel changes, consistent with collective bargaining
- MPS has used the First things First reform model to reform some low-performing high schools.
- MPS has closed schools that are not performing, but does not require students to transfer to a new school based on performance. The MPS Superintendent recommended in September 2009 that three more high schools and 11 elementary or K-8 schools be considered for closure based on their lower than projected enrollment and consistently low academic performance. Note: That recommendation did not include any schools that were consistently low-performing but which met their projected enrollment. In November 2009 a committee of the board is recommending that one of the elementary schools be closed.
- School Reconstitution Process exists in the MTEA contract, but to the Committee's knowledge has never been utilized.

Are there additional steps to take or issues to address in order to implement the criterion?

- The following reforms would require MPS board approval and be subject to collective bargaining:
 - Extended school day or year (unless mandated by DPI if aforementioned bill passes)

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- Turning over staff in a building
- Closing more schools and sending students to high-performing schools may require increasing capacity in those schools or replicating successful models. For example, closing the schools currently under consideration by the MPS Superintendent would result in the need to transfer 3,324 elementary students and 768 high school students to high-performing schools. This represents roughly 5% of total enrollment. It is unknown if the capacity exists in high-performing schools to accept that many transferred students.
- The State needs to establish a measure for identifying turnaround schools

Models/Ideas Committee discussed in this area:

- Common Themes
 - Extended Learning Time
 - Commitment from teachers parents, students
 - Support and preparation for teachers and principals
 - High Standards
- AUSL
- KIPP
- Capital Prep
- New Haven Teachers Contract – teachers must reapply for jobs in turnaround schools, principal hires all teachers, contract provisions waived
- Massachusetts Extended Learning Time Model - \$1300 per pupil, 1400 hours
- Harlem Children’s Zone
- David Berliner Article: *Poverty and Potential: Out of School Factors and Student Success*. <http://epicpolicy.org/files/PB-Berliner-NON-SCHOOL.pdf>
- Concern raised re: how special needs students are addressed in these models

Committee Recommendations:

1. **Establish a ranking system.** An independent entity should establish a transparent system to rank schools based on comprehensive measures including overall performance and student gains, so it is clear which schools are high-performing, which are low-performing and which are doing fine but may need some additional guidance or resources. This ranking system should be approached thoughtfully and the necessary resources should be invested to establishing the appropriate measures. These measures should be consistent with measures used for other purposes such as a teacher compensation structure.
2. **Increase capacity in high performing schools.** This can be accomplished either by expanding existing programs or replicating successful models as part of a turnaround of existing schools. Either approach would likely require one-time resources to implement.

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This will not only serve to provide alternatives for students in low-performing schools, but could also attract more students overall and help address concerns for declining enrollment. Determining which models to replicate must be approached thoughtfully, including seeking input from parents and considering geographic distribution, so that resources are not wasted.

3. **Encourage partnerships between high-performing and low-performing schools.** This could be achieved in a variety of ways such as:
 - a. Providing incentives to both schools based on overall improvement.
 - b. Establishing programs where teachers or students spend time in a partner school.
4. **Identify schools where a turnaround strategy should be implemented.** Once the ranking system is established, a sustainable strategy should be put in place to identify schools that are persistently among the worst and implement one of the turnaround strategies below.
5. **Turnaround Option 1: Keep school open with changed leadership and reforms.** The following policies should be implemented in each turnaround school:
 - a. Bring in a new leadership team, comprised of individuals that have demonstrated the ability to lead a successful urban school
 - b. Allow the leadership team to select staff (need MOU)
 - c. Establish a new compensation structure – as described in the teacher compensation section. Relevant components include:
 - i. A salary add-on for teaching in a turnaround school could be offered in addition to the base pay.
 - ii. Stipend for teams of teachers who demonstrate improved academic gains for groups of students.
 - iii. Teachers can be eligible for additional credit toward career advancement for teaching in a turnaround school.
 - d. Reward the leadership team (at the school or in the school's district cluster) based on overall improvement in school performance.
 - e. Require teachers to commit to teaching in the school for three years, in exchange for the compensation add-ons and targeted professional development and support discussed above.
 - f. Implement a longer school day.
 - g. Implement a year-round calendar to address the regression that occurs during summer vacation.

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- 6. Introduce incentive for NBCTs to teach in low-performing schools.** An additional incentive should be given to teachers who become nationally board certified and commit to serving in a low-performing school for a minimum of three years. **
- 7. Turnaround Option 2: Close low-performing schools.** Given the excess capacity in Milwaukee Public Schools, closing schools in the lowest ranking category as part of a strategy to address poor performance will likely make sense. However, it is critical that the district ensures all students in schools that are closed are placed in schools that are higher performing. Some suggestions to consider in implementing this model:
 - a. MPS should develop a strategy to minimize the disruption for students whose schools are closed and facilitate transferring each student to a high – performing alternative. Students should be actively recruited by higher-performing schools and provided options among them.
 - b. A strategy for expanding capacity in high-performing schools (as mentioned above) must be implemented.
 - c. Additional support and resources should be provided to the “receiver school” to assist with the transition. For example, receiver schools could also be assigned additional staff to fill the need for further support in classrooms.
 - d. Administrators, teachers and staff in closed schools will be reevaluated and offered appropriate support in securing future placement.
- 8. Ensure pipeline of effective teachers and leaders to staff turnaround schools.** A system must be established to ensure a pipeline of qualified teachers and leaders to staff these schools. This could be accomplished through a teacher residency program similar to the AUSL in Chicago where new teachers are paired with high-quality teachers. Consideration could be given to placing the resident teachers into schools that will be receiving students as a result of school closures. This will provide additional support to the receiver schools. The New York Leadership Academy model could be considered for expanding the supply of effective principals.
- 9. Establish Milwaukee Neighborhood Centers to support schools in certain neighborhoods, modeled after the Harlem Children’s Zone.** Neighborhoods with turnaround schools should be targeted to become a neighborhood center. These centers should provide comprehensive supports included but not limited to efforts to:
 - a. Reduce the rate of low birth weight children.
 - b. Reduce drug and alcohol abuse.
 - c. Reduce exposure to pollutants, including concerns for lead paint.
 - d. Address health care needs for all citizens, including mental health services.
 - e. Insure that no one suffers from food insecurity.

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- f. Reduce the rates of family violence.
- g. Provide affordable housing.
- h. Reduce both the mobility and absenteeism rates of children.
- i. Provide high-quality child care and/or preschools for all children.
- j. Provide after school and summer programs to reduce summer losses in academic achievement.

At a minimum, each turnaround school should be supported by a Community Learning Center and efforts should be made to provide additional social supports to the children and families in those schools. The goal should be that these targeted partnerships and supports become system wide so that Milwaukee eventually has a “Citywide” Neighborhood Center.

10. **Preserve what’s working.** Respect and reward schools and policies that are already demonstrating success. Ensure that as we focus on struggling schools we recognize those that are excelling and allow them to continue their work.
11. **Empower teachers with knowledge and resources to support students outside the classroom.** The district should also empower teachers with practical knowledge of challenges facing students in an urban setting that can affect their school performance. Such training should be a formal part of the induction or residency program for new teachers. Teachers should also be aware of and have access to current resources both within and outside the school that can assist their students and families with health, nutrition or other support services. **